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THE SOCIETY OF DESIGNERS

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D ESIGNERS' JOTTINGS

MR. LUNN's lecture on 'Design for Pottery' was delivered, as announced, at Clifford's Inn on November 21st before the Society of Designers. There was a large audience, and the lecture was followed by discussion. The paper will shortly be published in our columns with some of the illustrations Mr. Lunn used on the occasion. These comprised a selection of the Science and Art Department's lantern slides of pottery, which were used to illustrate the brief historical sketch which Mr. Lunn



HAND MIRROR
IN SILVER REPOUSSE
BY JAMES HAVENHAND



STUDY OF A HEAD
IN STEEL AND COPPER
BY JAMES HAVENHAND

considers necessary to a proper appreciation of the subject, and a large variety of beautiful objects which were kindly lent by the directors of the Crown Derby Porcelain Co., the Coalport China Co., and Messrs. Doulton's.

As often happens in the case of a lecturer so thoroughly at home in his subject, Mr. Lunn considerably expanded the matter of his paper in the reading, adding descriptive notes on his illustrations, and delighting his hearers with some of the varied and valuable reminiscences of which his long experience in his craft has provided him with so rich a store. Much interest was excited by a discussion on the comparative value of the potter's wheel and the mould; the general opinion appearing to be that each method of production had its own peculiar advantages suiting it for different styles of design and for different methods of work. Amongst others, Mr. Walter Gandy and several members of the Society took part in the discussion, which was replied to by the lecturer.

To speak of coming events, Mr. Townsend's paper on 'Design for Embroidery' on February 20th, should be of interest; and on April 24th, at the Members' Evening, Mr. A. A. Turbayne will show some Book-decorations, such as bindings in cloth and leather, paper covers, title-pages, publishers' marks, head- and tail-pieces, posters, etc., etc. Mr. Turbayne's power in this direction is unquestioned, and such a show will doubtless be eagerly welcomed by designers and others interested in the decoration of books.

The hand-mirror and 'study of a head' illustrated this month are by Mr. James Havenhand, and have been executed as well as designed by him. The mirror is in silver repoussé, very elaborately wrought, and full of excellent work. The subject is 'Andromache sorrowing for the loss of Hector.' The 'Study of a head' represents Britomartis;



A CABINET
BY G. M. ELLWOOD

it is executed in steel with certain copper embellishments. The handling of this subject is exceptionally strong and workmanlike.

Mr. Ellwood's work in design is very varied, ranging as it does from Christmas cards to interior decoration; my illustrations, however, represent two branches in which he spends a large part of his time—furniture and pictorial advertisement. The cabinet is very interesting as being—in the original I mean, of course in the reproduction this is lost—so full of colour. It is in oak, with steel hinges, copper panels and ornaments with gold 'inset,' and gold panels at the back of upper portion. During the past year or so Mr. Ellwood has designed a large number of chimney-pieces; one of these was (as a design) in this year's Academy show.

I hear that Mr. Herbert Pepper, some of whose charming designs for electric-light fittings were illustrated in *THE ARTIST* last month, has been commissioned by Messrs. F. and C. Osler for a tour of some months' duration in India on their behalf. Mr. Pepper's mission is to find out what kind of electric-light fittings, etc., are wanted for the Indian market, and there is little doubt that such a preliminary inquiry will be of great assistance to the firm

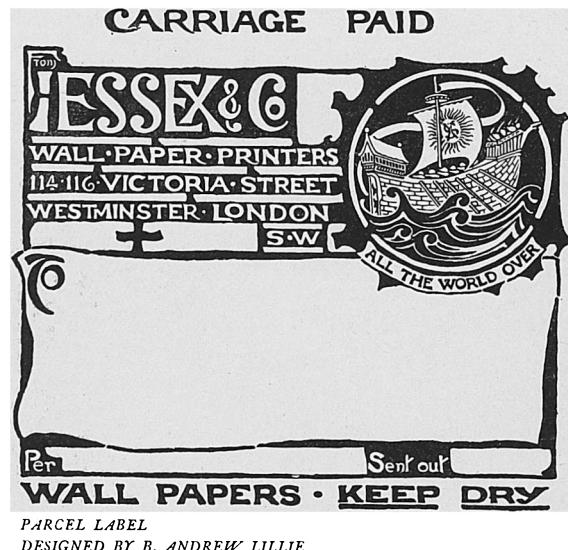
and would save much time in catering for any market. The idea of finding out what is wanted before offering to supply goods is one that is thoroughly appreciated by many Continental firms in various branches of applied art, and may well be one of the more important reasons for the successful competition of foreign with English goods, where such occurs. It is heartening to see an English firm displaying such enterprise, and I wish Messrs. Osler all the success they deserve.

I suppose it will be long years before so commanding a figure as the late William Morris ceases to be of almost absorbing interest to the decorating world in general, and, to a certain extent, to the designer. No one could wish it otherwise. Evidences of this interest have, since his death, been everywhere apparent in books and papers and wherever two or three (decorating individuals) are met together, and it may be thought that any further remarks by me are totally unnecessary. Yet there is one aspect, of some interest to designers, which I have not yet heard touched upon. It is presented to me more forcibly by a consideration of the exhibits in the 'Morris room' at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition, though it has been familiar to me for years as the result of a fairly intimate acquaintance with Mr. Morris's production in pattern-design.

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The great and over-ruling personality of the man comes out, nowhere more plainly—to the designer—than in the original drawings of his pattern designs now so fitly for the first time collected and exhibited by the Society of which he was one of the founders and first president. It would appear that he was quite impatient of many of the restrictions which production ordinarily imposes upon pattern designers and scornful of the patient methods we have been forced to adopt in the production of our 'things of beauty' under these restrictions. Possibly this impatience, after all, led him into a longer road; I have heard it said by those familiar with his habits of work, that none of his creative work, even literary composition, caused him half the agony in deliverance as did the designing of a pattern for silk or wall-paper.

Again, those who have had in hand the production of his designs in certain branches have bewailed the loss of time and money and opportunity caused by his disregarding or refusing to conform to the accepted usages in the method of the repeats and other little things of importance in pattern designing. Practical designers will understand me when I say that although almost any kind of repeat may be used on many fabrics, long usage has decreed certain shapes and sizes in their respective materials, and the capability of ordinary manufacturing plant has been adapted to suit. Nor is this purely a convention, such as might well be disregarded by a powerful designer with large means at his command. The *natures* of the materials and the uses to which they are intended to be put have been powerful factors in evolving the character of the repeat and *cannot be disregarded*. Most designers who have at times thought the iron pressure of custom rather arbitrary, have come, after years of practice, to feel the weight of the underlying and sometimes unexplainable reasons that have moulded it. To the end, Mr. Morris's individuality appears to have ridden roughshod over these conventions, and we see printed cottons designed on the plan of a woven pattern, often, who will not say it? with the grandest results.



But because a frank admirer of his work is prepared to admit this, it does not follow that these idiosyncracies, which his genius excused, should be made the *motif* of the less important work of men who have studied his style, and I confess, I think the occasions are very rare on which the carelessness which sticks on every material the same plan of repeat is forgiveable. To the man whose time was so filled up with the beautiful work which will long delight us and which has had so great an effect on our styles of decoration, nothing may be said of his bold disregard of what had gone before him, but one cannot help wondering what would have been the result had he had time to gather the technique and ready dodges of pattern-designing, and so made the production of his ideas easier.



WORK TABLE
BY
G. M. ELLWOOD



MUSIC TITLE PAGE
BY G. M. ELLWOOD

By the way, I have several times heard it claimed that Mr. Morris was assisted by others in his pattern-design—the kind of claim which was bound to be put in for one or both of two obvious reasons. I believe, from what I have been told by those who knew his habits, that his pattern-designs were *entirely* designed by himself, and,

indeed, they are in every way stamped with his manner. If, after a study of the obviously self-instructed way in which the cartoons are executed, any professional pattern-designer cares to claim a hand in *carrying out* Mr. Morris's ideas—well, I wish him joy of it, that carrying-out is nothing for him to be proud of.

I.B.